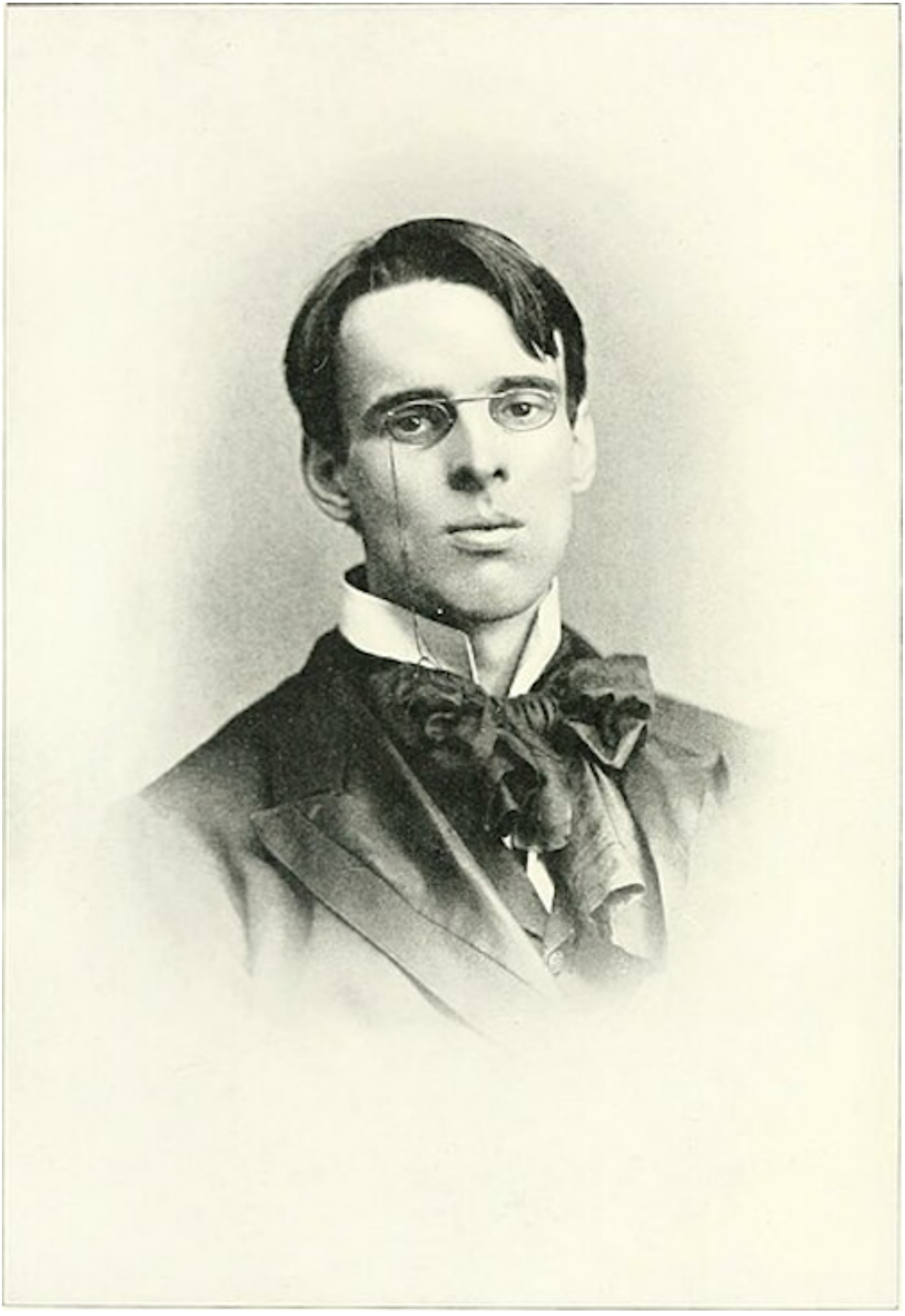


From Zelator to Theoricus: Yeats's 'Link with the Invisible Degrees'

George Mills Harper

It has sometimes been critically fashionable, by those who are disturbed over Yeats's magical investigations, to dismiss them as a passing fancy limited primarily to his youthful friendship with MacGregor Mathers and his talented wife, the sister of Henri Bergson. Although Yeats's interest in the Order of the Golden Dawn did change after the break with Mathers in 1900 and the internal dissension of 1901,[1] it is perhaps fair to say that his interest in magic never flagged. The great mass of unpublished materials, now in the library of Senator Michael Yeats, testifies to the extent of his commitment and enables us to establish important dates and to trace several stages in the development of Yeats's thinking about vision and magic. My concern here is with the first stage of his studies in the Order of the Golden Dawn—that is, before the suspension of Mathers in 1900.

Although Yeats recalls in *The Trembling of the Veil* (1921) being initiated into Mathers's secret society, 'The Hermetic Students', 'in May or June 1887 . . . in a Charlotte Street studio',[2] he is probably confusing Mathers's group with Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society, which he may have joined in 1887.[3] According to a printed invitation to membership in the Golden Dawn which Yeats carefully preserved, he was initiated at 17 Fitzroy Street, London, on Friday, 7 March 1890.[4] Across the top in Yeats's hand is written: 'My admission W. B. Yeats Dec 25, 1919'. Since the Isis-Urania Temple was closed in 1919,[5] it may well be that Yeats felt

1 I am preparing extended studies of both quarrels which I think will cast considerable light on the investigations which culminated in *A Vision* (1925).

2 *Autobiographies* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1955), p. 183.

3 According to Virginia Moore, *The Unicorn* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1954), pp. 23–24. There is a brief unpublished diary about this experience.

4 The invitation is pasted inside the back cover of a vellum note-book given to Yeats by Maud Gonne. It contains an interesting record of several occult experiments they conducted together.

5 Moore, p. 177.

he had come to the end of a period and should put the record in order. Although he insisted in a note to 'The Trembling of the Veil' that 'I am not now a member of a Cabbalistic society,'[6] in April 1921 he was still receiving letters bearing the standard form of address to a brother of the Order of the Golden Dawn: 'Care G. H. Frater'.[7]

By the time of Yeats's initiation into the Golden Dawn, the London Temple (Number 3) was apparently flourishing and well organized under the leadership of MacGregor Mathers, the Chief Adept, and William Wynn Westcott, the Chief Adept in Charge and Registrar.[8] From 1884, when the cypher manuscripts, which are the basis for much of the ritual, were found on a London book stall, to 1890 Mathers and Westcott had been recruiting members and preparing the various rituals, instructional manuals and so on, many of which are preserved in Yeats's papers. Several of his note-books are in effect work-books. One of the most detailed and exciting of the note-books follows carefully the instructions outlined in one of the manuals prepared by Mathers and Westcott. A brief comparison of the note-book and the manual will illustrate the attention Yeats paid to the work of the Order and by extension the extent of his intellectual commitment to its doctrines. The cover sheet of the manual, in the handwriting of Frater F. L. Gardner, suggests its purpose and is authenticated by the initials of Mathers's and Westcott's secret mottoes, D.D.C.F. and N.O.M.[9] Across the top in four carefully

6 *Autobiographies*, p. 576.

7 Two letters in the library of Senator Yeats from C. M. Stoddart: the first, dated 2 April 1921, asks Yeats to return or destroy certain notes; the second, dated 15 April, suggests the basis for the quarrel which apparently led to the dissolution of the London chapter. I plan to discuss these issues more fully in another article. I am greatly indebted to Senator Yeats for the opportunity to examine extensive manuscript materials and to quote from them in this article. The G. H. stands for 'Greatly Honoured'.

8 A third chief, William K. Woodman, died in 1890, leaving Mathers and Westcott in charge until Mathers moved to Paris in 1894 (?). The warrant 'necessary for the constitution of an Order' was signed by the three chiefs on 1 March 1888.

9 *Deo Duce Comite Ferro* and *Non Omnis Moriar*. All members of the order took such mottoes. They were usually Latin and sometimes changed: Mathers, Westcott and Yeats had at least two each.

For the copy of the manual used here, I am indebted to Kathleen Raine, who in turn is indebted to the generosity of Gerald Yorke, one of the best-informed students of the Golden Dawn. As a result of many discussions in Dublin last summer and many letters since, I am more indebted to Miss Raine than any acknowledgement can express.

spaced lines appears the identification: 'RR et AC/being the/Second order of the/GD'. We are informed next that the manual is intended for the 'Adeptus Minor 5°=6°'. A generalized list of the contents follows. In its entirety the manual serves as a guide for the aspirant from the sub-grade of Zelator Adeptus Minor to the sub-grade of Theoricus Adeptus Minor. The fifth of ten stages or grades, the 5°=6° is the first truly difficult step because its achievement admits the candidate to the Inner or Second Order. Even more involved was the progress from Zelator to Theoricus in the grade of 5°=6° which Yeats described in a privately printed and little-known essay: 'It is indeed of special, perhaps of supreme, moment to give the Degree of Theoricus, the highest Degree known to us, enough of importance to make the Fratres and Sorores look towards it with respect and attention, for the Degree of Theoricus is our link with the invisible Degrees.'[10] From the evidence of Yeats's work-book it appears that he spent some nineteen years in achieving this step.

He obviously purchased his note-book in response to directions in the manual: 'The Chief Adept in charge desires that each Adept will procure a small M.S.S. Book and enter for himself the Titles and Sub-Divisions of all the Examinations. With this phrase written out for each Examination. "I the undersigned do this day certify that I have duly examined Quicumque Vult and am satisfied with attainments which have been shown." This Book must then be produced at each Examination and also on admission to the Grade of Theoricus.' These directions come at the end of some twenty pages of general instruction concerning the kind and sequence of examinations to be studied and passed. In a similar position, after approximately 140 pages of exercises, Yeats has five times written 'I the undersigned do this day certify that I have duly examined D.E.D.I. . . .' The first two certifications (designated A and B) are signed 'Non Omnis Moriar' (in Yeats's handwriting). C and D are unsigned, but Yeats has pencilled a note in red after C: 'passed this (Part I) in June 1895'. E has an added phrase in another hand ('and that he is now T.A.M.'), is signed 'Fenim Respice' and is dated 'July 10th 1912'. An inserted

10 'Is the Order of R.R. & A.C. to remain a Magical Order?' p. 8. Written in 1901 to resolve a quarrel, it was signed D.E.D.I.—that is, *Demon Est Deus Inversus*, the motto by which Yeats was known after 1893, the date of his admission to the 5°=6° grade. According to Virginia Moore, he had assumed several others which he abandoned as he passed the various grades.

certificate makes clear that the handwriting is that of Dr Felkin, the Chief Adept from the reorganization in 1902 until the closing of the Temple in 1919: 'I, the undersigned, hereby certify this 10th day of July in the year 1912 that having investigated the V. H. Frater D.E.D.I.'s papers and certificates, he is now T.A.M. in the Order. Fenim Respice T.A.M. Chief.'

Perhaps the most fascinating thing about the note-book is the care with which Yeats detailed the task ahead in response to instructions in the manual. After an opening section on general orders, the manual outlines the 'regulations' for the attainment of sub-grade Theoricus (T.A.M.) in five stages. The first stage begins with an admission ceremony, after which the candidate receives general instructions and is informed that 'the 5=6 Ritual is to be thoroughly studied and the clauses of the obligation as referred to the Sephiroth are to be impressed upon the memory.' Yeats marked the first page of his note-book PRIVATE in large caps, wrote 'DEDI June 28, 1893' in the upper right-hand corner[11] and began his work with a full statement (from memory) of the 'Obligation of Adeptus Minor 5=6'. Beginning 'I Demon Est Deus Inversus do bind myself', the obligation is divided into ten parts marked by Hebrew letters referring to the ten Sephiroth of the cabbala representing the various grades of the Golden Dawn.[12] The obligation (covering five pages) is followed by 'General Orders', which is the heading of the opening section of the manual. Among several general observations is one which appears to refer directly to the instructional manual: 'This volume points out the course of study, and the work required to be done.' After a brief paragraph of warning (himself, in effect) about the consequences of failure 'to follow this course of study', Yeats projects his plan under such headings as 'Work' and 'Study'. The work had to do chiefly with making and consecrating 'certain magical implements'. The

11 On the inside of the front cover is pasted a standard printed form (but with a signature and date in Yeats's hand) saying that 'these papers are private,' etc., and should be returned to *Sapere Aude* (Westcott) 'in case of my death or incapacity'.

12 According to 'The Historic Lecture to Neophytes', 'written and first delivered by Q. S. N.' (Westcott), 'The Scheme of the G. D. then is formed upon the type of the Decad of the Sephiroth, the Ten Emanations of Deity as figured in the very ancient Kabalah of the Hebrews, whose professors were illuminated by the High Magic of the ancient world.' When this manual was written (1888), the Isis-Urania Temple was 'authorized to confer' 'the neophyte grade and the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades'. I am indebted to Miss Raine and Mr Yorke for a copy of this manual.

study being more involved, he listed the subjects under twelve headings, such as 'symbolism contained in the neophyte grade', 'simple spirit vision', 'simple astral projection', 'clairvoyant analysis of the Four great tablets of Enoch', 'The vibratory mode of pronouncing Divine and other names', and so forth. The word 'passed', in a hand other than Yeats's, is written diagonally across four of the twelve subjects. The following page contains a 'Catalogue of MSS', A to H (eight in all) which were needed for the eight examinations discussed in Westcott's manual. Section B (seventeen pages immediately after the catalogue) is devoted to 'The Supreme Ritual of the Pentagram'. This is followed in section C by an equally involved 'Ritual of Hexagram'. Then in order come 'D—Lotus Wand' and 'E—The Complete Symbol of the Rose Cross', including extended discussion of 'Consecration' (in thirty-five numbered steps) and 'Formation of Sigils'. Since these last two exercises are a part of the study for H examination and belong to the fifth stage of study, according to the manual, it seems likely that Yeats's five certifications (A to E) represent the completion of the five stages of progress for the attainment of T.A.M.

Although the manual informs the candidate that 'this course may be completed within two years,' even a cursory survey of the eight examinations makes it seem unlikely that many did complete the course in the minimum time. For example, A—Preliminary had two parts (one written, the other 'Viva Voce and Practical in presence of Examiner'), and covered such subjects as the Obligation, Minutum Mundum Diagram, use of Tarot cards, Rose Cross and Sigils, Ritual of Pentagram and Ritual of Hexagram. And the candidate was warned that 'in Part II the ceremonials must show "effect" as well as verbal accuracy.' There is not space here to record even the brief summary of the manual, but a list of the other seven examinations will suggest the magnitude of the task: B—Elemental (on the magical implements); C—Psychic (judging visions from Tatwa cards); D—Divination (astrology, geomancy, and Tarot); E—Magic (talismans, flashing tablets, ascending planes, vibratory mode, etc.); F—Elemental Enochian Tablet (especially 'the 16 Servient Squares of each Lesser Angle, as to Angel, Sphynx, and God'); G—Symbolical ('Symbols and Formulae from the Neophyte Ritual'); H—Consecration or Evocation.

If the candidate is to complete all this satisfactorily, he must virtually memorize the twenty-five M.S.S. and thirty-six Flying Rolls

listed at the end of the manual.[13] But he is warned that all this work may not be enough: 'On the completion of this course of Study, and the Passing of the Eight Examinations specified the Chiefs may, at their discretion, admit the Zelator Adeptus Minor to the Sub-Grade of Theoricus Adeptus Minor: but there exists no actual right to such higher Grade.' It is not surprising, I suppose, that the assumption of such autocratic power by Westcott and Mathers should have resulted in considerable unrest among the members of Isis-Urania Temple. When after a bitter quarrel with Westcott in 1897 Mathers became sole authority (Florence Farr Emery was his representative in London), he became unbearable and the yoke was thrown off. But that is another chapter, for which I am gathering information.

Despite the difficulty of the course of study, the quarrel with Mathers, internal dissension, considerable travel and the unhappy affair with Maud Gonne (who was a member for a time), it is, nevertheless, surprising that Yeats should have been nineteen years in attaining the sub-grade of Theoricus Adeptus Minor of the $5^\circ = {}^\circ 6$ Grade. But it should be even more surprising that he persevered. Although the mass of Golden Dawn materials preserved in his papers is a testament to the intensity of his commitment, it also suggests that a far more important mass (of Yeats's letters and memoranda) is destroyed, hidden away or yet undiscovered. Since many of those to whom Yeats wrote were not as conscious of their place in history as he, they were probably less careful to preserve even the letters of a great man. Like Yeats, of course, each of them had sworn 'that I will keep secret all things connected with this order & its secret knowledge from the

13 The M.S.S. and the Flying Rolls are study manuals, most if not all of which were copied by hand. Although they were kept in the meeting rooms, they might be posted by registered mail to members in the 'country'. One of these was Yeats's uncle George Pollexfen, who probably had a great number of them at his death in September 1910 when they apparently passed into Yeats's custody. At any rate, many of the manuals are now in the possession of Senator Michael Yeats. Almost without exception they are beautifully written, often in coloured ink and many of them contain elaborate diagrams, charts and pictures.

Some—perhaps many—of them were copied by L. Leigh Gardner (Experto Credo), who was the librarian of the Westcott Hermetic Library (founded in 1891), West Kensington, London. Yeats had a printed copy of the catalogue of this impressive library (286 items), and his own library includes a sizeable occult collection. I am indebted to Miss Anne Yeats, the present owner, for an opportunity to inspect the collection with Kathleen Raine.

whole world, equally from him who is a member of the first order of the GD as from an uninitiated person, & that I will maintain the veil of strict secrecy between the First and Second orders'. That obviously pulls the circle tight. Since, however, most of the secrets have now been revealed, notably by Aleister Crowley and Israel Regardie, there may be cause for optimism that additional letters and manuscripts will be discovered. Hidden in attics and private book collections are, I have no doubt, vast quantities of materials which would illuminate not only Yeats's religious development but also the thinking of an age in search of psychological and philosophical verities.[14]

14 The remainder of Yeats's note-book—that is, after the five certifications—also has some interest. The next page records, in very sketchy notes, experiments to invoke lunar powers. Across the top is written 'Tullyra Castle August 9, 10, 11', but the days of an entire week are listed in the notes, and the names of Diana and Symons appear under Friday. The next two pages record an 'attempt to project a vision of ∇ (i.e. water) to Festina Lente' (George Pollexfen).

These rather chaotic jottings are followed by the carefully recorded notes of a lecture on 'The Formation of Talismans of flashing tablets'. It was delivered to the College of Adepti by D.D.C.F. (Mathers).

One other section of some length is designated G (there is no section F), and the word 'abridged' is written at the top of the first page. It is concerned chiefly with the magical implements—their consecration, relation to elemental forces and so on.

The remainder of the note-book (some sixteen pages) is filled with a series of rough sketches usually accompanied by brief explanatory notes about their symbolic value or meaning.

The Tables of the Law: A Critical Text

Robert O'Driscoll

CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

The Tables of the Law can be best approached by being considered in relation to two other stories Yeats wrote in 1896 and 1897, *Rosa Alchemica* and *The Adoration of the Magi*, stories which present in uncompromising terms the apocalyptic annunciation of a new dispensation. The structure of these stories is also similar: each has as narrator an orthodox Christian; through this technique Yeats was not only able to explore his own ambivalence towards the new annunciation, but was also able to provide a dramatic balance between the orthodoxy of his readers and the strangeness of the message he had to impart.

The situation in *Rosa Alchemica* is complicated by the fact that the narrator holds certain convictions that Yeats himself may have held at one point during the eighteen-nineties. The narrator has driven everything from him except dreams; he has separated himself completely from the external world and surrounded himself with paintings, tapestries, sculptures and literature which shut out 'all history and activity untouched with beauty and peace'.[1] Through art and meditation he believes that he can 'rob life of every bitterness except the bitterness of death' and experience the range of human passions 'without their bitterness and without satiety':

> I had gathered about me all gods because I believed in none, and experienced every pleasure because I gave myself to none, but held myself apart, individual, indissoluble, a mirror of polished steel. (p. 268)

1 *Mythologies* (London), p. 268. Unless otherwise specified all quotations from *Rosa Alchemica* and *The Adoration of the Magi* in this article are from *Mythologies*; to avoid cumbersome repetition, page numbers are inserted in the commentary when appropriate. The quotations from *The Tables of the Law* are from the 'Critical Text', but in these quotations I have not followed the editorial conventions of the text.

(11) Cross Roads. She . . . [1905; 1908; 1925; 1927];
Cross Road. She . . . [1913]
(23) hearth, aud [sic] other . . . [1905]
p.260 (2) time," he said./ And . . . [1905; 1908; 1913]
p.261 (1) Cross Roads . . . [1905; 1908; 1913; 1925; 1927]
(6) at me. Look at me, perishing . . . [1905; 1908; 1913]
(8) like the lake water after you . . . [1905; 1908; 1913]
(9) the old race . . . [1908; 1913]
(11–12) are wearing away like a candle that has been burned . . . [1905; 1908; 1913]
(12) laugh out loud, because . . . [1905; 1908; 1913]
(15) turf cutters . . . [1905; 1908; 1913; 1925; 1927]

'Meditations upon Unknown Thought': Yeats's Break with MacGregor Mathers

George Mills Harper

The full story of Yeats's involvement with the Order of the Golden Dawn will perhaps never be told, chiefly because the members were sworn to secrecy but in part because we have so few papers by or about MacGregor Mathers, one of the three founders of Isis-Urania, Temple No. 3, in London.[1] Although Yeats was careful to the end not to reveal details about the ritual or history of the Order, he preserved a mass of materials intended for instruction of the candidates as they progressed through various grades. Also among Yeats's papers is a printed account of a great schism in the Order which occurred in early spring 1900. Although the printed 'List of Documents' which outlines the developing quarrel step by step contains no letters from Yeats, the sequence of events and many references point to his leadership in the debate by correspondence which resulted in the expulsion of Mathers from the London temple. Since, also, three rebuttal footnotes in the printed list of documents bear the Order initials of Mrs Florence Farr Emery and Yeats, they obviously prepared the list, which was apparently intended for Charles Russell (son of the lord chief justice), who was to act for the Isis-Urania Temple in the suit against Mathers.[2] Since Yeats usually enjoyed such verbal battles, it is rather strange

1 The other two were Dr William R. Woodman and Dr William Wynn Westcott. Woodman died in 1891, the year of Yeats's initiation, and Westcott resigned in 1897 after a quarrel with Mathers. I am indebted to Senator Michael Yeats for permission to quote from and reproduce the unpublished materials upon which this article is based. Without his tolerance and continued co-operation it obviously would have been impossible. I am indebted also to Miss Kathleen Raine, who met me in Dublin in August 1969 to discuss these materials, of which she had found other copies of some in the library of Gerald Yorke. Hence I am indirectly indebted to him.

2 In a letter to Lady Gregory postmarked 25 April 1900, Yeats wrote that 'Charles Russell, the son of the Lord Chief Justice, is acting for us. . . .' (*The Letters of W. B. Yeats*, ed. Allan Wade [New York: Macmillan Co.], p. 340.) But according to an unpublished statement prepared after the event, 'the Committee [which included Yeats] instructed Mr Gill, barrister-at-law to appear for them'.

that he did not enter directly into the debate. He had, of course, been very close to both Mathers and his wife (Henri Bergson's sister) and may have sought to avoid attacking old friends. After they moved to Paris and before the quarrel in 1900, Yeats corresponded with both the Matherses[3] and frequently stayed with them when he visited Paris.[4] Whatever the reason for Yeats's avoiding the battle of letters, it is clear that he was actively engaged, was in fact director of strategy. 'I have had a bad time of it lately,' he wrote to Lady Gregory. 'I told you that I was putting MacGregor out of the Kabbala. Well last week he sent a mad person—whom we had refused to initiate—to take possession of the rooms and papers of the Society.' Because Yeats was conscious of 'the past and the honour that one owes even to a fallen idol' and was at the same time 'trying to keep my name out of the Business', his diplomatic and organizational talents were tried to the utmost. Also, because, in his words, 'my Kabbalists are hopelessly unbusiness like', Yeats was forced 'to take the whole responsibility for everything, to decide on every step'.[5]

'All legal and practical argument urged us to immediate action,'[6] he wrote to George Russell (AE). The reasons for and the record of this action reveal an often overlooked side of Yeats's character. His first responsibility apparently was the preparation of a statement which would follow the series of events culminating in the invasion of the meeting rooms on 36 Blythe Road by Aleister Crowley, Mathers's 'unspeakable' envoy. Attempting to present their case *'without prejudice'* as they headed the cover sheet, Yeats and Mrs Emery were content to rely almost entirely on letters and printed documents.

Although the List of Documents should have spoken for itself, they felt that some further explanation to the members of the Order was needed. Thinking apparently that their actions might be misconstrued, they prepared a 'Statement of Recent Events which have led to the

3 Several letters in the library of Senator Michael Yeats discuss the preparation of rituals for Yeats's Celtic Order with which the Matherses were assisting. I intend to discuss this project more fully in another article.

4 W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies* (London: Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 335. But when he dedicated *A Vision* (1925) to 'Vestigia' (Mrs Mathers's motto in the Golden Dawn), Yeats wrote: 'I had not seen you for more than thirty years, nor knew where you were nor what you were doing' (p. IX). This is probably a deliberate exaggeration, though Yeats's memory for details was not always reliable.

5 *Letters*, pp. 339–40.

6 Ibid., p. 343.

present Constitution of the Second Order in London'. Addressed 'To 5–6' (that is, members of the Second Order)[7] and also headed 'Without Prejudice', the statement is a printed summary, with some interpretation of 'The Catalogue of Documents to go with this'. A series of dates and numbers in the left-hand margin relates the statement to the events and to the documents prepared for the solicitor. Before the list of documents presented at the conclusion of this article, a brief summary will perhaps be helpful.[8]

On 16 February 1900 Mrs Emery (identified as V. H. Soror, S.S.D.D.)[9] received a stern letter from MacGregor Mathers, 7–4, Chief of the Second Order,[10] accusing Westcott of forging the correspondence with Fräulein Anna Sprengel,[11] which had in effect bestowed

7 It was theoretically possible for the aspirant to pass through nine grades (plus Neophyte 0–0) in the achievement of pure spirit in the tenth grade. The ten grades were divided into three groups or orders as follows:

First or Outer Order: 1–10, 2–9, 3–8, 4–7;
Second or Inner Order: 5–6, 6–5, 7–4;
Third or Invisible Order: 8–3, 9–2, 10–1.

There was some debate whether anyone known to the members of the Golden Dawn could achieve the Invisible Order in this life. Most of the members discussed in this article had achieved 5–6. Because Mathers laid claim to 7–4 and insisted that he had authority for 'suspension, resignation, dismission and expulsion from the Second Order', the revolt outlined herein was considered, by Yeats at least, as a desperate last resort to keep the Golden Dawn from disintegrating. Father Christian Rosencreuz, the mythical founder of the Golden Dawn, may have attained the grade of 10–1.

8 My summary usually follows the order of the statement. For the sake of convenience, I have omitted quotation marks from all but a few lines or phrases.

9 That is, 'Very Honoured Sister Sapientia Sapienti Dono Data'. All members of the order assumed Latin mottoes, which usually changed as they passed from degree to degree. The result is often confusing, as they intended it to be. When possible, I will identify the participants.

10 The letter was signed 'Deo Duce Comite Ferro'. Though absent in Paris since 1894(?), Mathers had continued as chief and was addressed G. H. (Greatly Honoured) rather than V. H. In his absence Westcott ('Sapere Aude') served as his representative in London until they quarrelled in 1897 and Mrs Emery thereafter.

11 Soror Sapiens Dominabitur Astris, Chief of Lichte Liebe Leben, Temple Number 1 of the Golden Dawn. A somewhat mysterious German woman, she probably died in 1893, though Mathers insisted, paradoxically, that she was alive (see letter of 16 February in list of documents below). According to Crowley, Mathers had been imposed upon by Mme Horos who claimed to be Sapiens. In an unpublished letter to Yeats on 24 June 1926, Mrs Mathers wrote that S.D.A. 'was an American and not a German' and that 'we never believed in her for one moment'. It is interesting, I think, that Yeats should have written to inquire about Fräulein Sprengel at this late date.

upon him the degree of 7–4 and authorized him to bestow the same degree on Mathers and Woodman, the other founders of the temple in London. When Mrs Emery wrote to Westcott about the authenticity of the letters, he pointed out that he could not prove Mathers false, Miss Sprengel being dead; but he did give P. W. Bullock ('Levavi Oculos') his honourable assurance' that he had no reason to doubt her identity, having written to her and received 'bona fide' letters in reply. Mathers, however, insisted that Miss Sprengel was alive in Paris and helping him 'with the Isis movement'. Wishing to remain neutral, Westcott marked his letter 'private', and the editors did not include it in the documents.

Because Mathers's right to chiefship rested on letters which Mathers declared forged, the London members were disturbed, and Mrs Emery formed a committee of seven to investigate.[12] When they asked for proof and were refused, they decided 'to place the matter before the Second Order'. In a letter of 23 March Mathers refused to recognize the committee, removed Mrs Emery from her position as his 'Representative in the Second Order in London' and informed Bullock of his action. The following day, before Mathers's letter arrived, a general meeting of the Second Order was called, and all official action of the entire temple was suspended until the committee could investigate and report.

In a letter of 2 April Mathers met fire with fire: he annulled the committee and the resolutions passed at the general meeting of 24 March, refused to acknowledge any authority except that of the Secret Chiefs of the Order and the Eternal Gods, and threatened the rebels with 'the Punitive Current' (which only the Highest Chiefs could set in motion). When the committee failed to respond to this threat, Mathers sent Aleister Crowley (an 'unspeakable mad person', in Yeats's words) to take possession of the order rooms at Blythe Road. Finding the door locked and the landlord absent, Crowley forced his way in on 17 April and commanded the members to appear before him at headquarters on the twentieth 'By order of Deo Duce Comite Ferro'. Two days later Yeats and Hunter recaptured the fortress, changed the locks again, and waited for Crowley ('Perdurabo'). Accompanied by Miss Elaine Simpson ('Donorum Dei Dispensatis

12 The committee consisted of Mrs Emery, Mrs E. A. Hunter ('Deo Date'), Yeats ('Demon Est Deus Inversus'), E. A. Hunter ('Hora Et Semper'), M. W. Blackden ('Ma Wahanu Thesi'), George Cecil Jones ('Volo Noscere') and Bullock.

Fidelis'), Crowley duly appeared 'in Highland dress, a black mask over his face, and a plaid thrown over his head and shoulders, an enormous gold or gilt cross on his breast, and a dagger at his side'.[13] Confronted by Yeats, Hunter and a constable, Crowley retreated. Four days later, on 23 April, he wrote to 'all members of the London Branch of the S[econd] O[rder]' demanding an individual interview and suspending Mrs Emery, Miss Cracknell ('Tempus Omnia Relevat'), Hunter, Bullock and Yeats.

This action was obviously retaliatory, for the committee had already (on 19 April) suspended Mathers, Dr Berridge ('Resurgam'), Miss Simpson and Mrs Simpson ('Perseverantia Et Cura Quies'), and denied admission to any person who had not been initiated into the Second Order by the London branch. Crowley was, of course, the object of this denial, as the 'Summary of Recent Events' makes clear: 'Perdurabo has never been legally advanced to the Portal nor admitted to the 5–6 Grade, and D.D.C.F. well knew he was a person undeserving of confidence.' If Yeats wrote or edited the summary, as I think he did, the restrained tone is no doubt the result of his striving to report 'without prejudice'.

Two days later, on Saturday, 21 April, the Order R. R. et A. C.[14] met in an extraordinary—and no doubt exciting—session. Speaking for the committee, Yeats must have dominated the meeting. We can only regret that we have nothing but the sparse account of two documents (XIV and XV) prepared for a solicitor to record what may have been one of his finest performances. According to the List, he began with 'an address on the history of the Order', then 'explained the illegalities which had crept in', 'spoke of the personal sorrow that it gave him to describe the actions which the G. H. Frater, D.D.C.F. had taken, . . . referred to the not less lamentable, though altogether ludicrous, proceedings of the past week', and concluded with a reference 'to the resolutions which the Committee proposed for the reconstruction of the Order'. Document XV contains the eleven resolutions passed on that memorable afternoon.

The 'Statement of Recent Events', prepared some time after the

13 Document XIC in list of documents. According to the authors of the summary statement, 'All this melodramatic nonsense was of course designed in the hope that it would cause members to sign a pledge of allegiance to D.D.C.F.'

14 That is, 'Rosae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis', a name of the order which reflects its Rosicrucian origin and doctrines.

'List of Documents' for the solicitor, contains additional information. First, it identifies, by office and motto, the ten members elected to replace the committee in accordance with the new system of government. Three were administrative: Moderator—Sapientia Sapienti Dono Data (Mrs Emery), Scribe—Fortiter Et Recte (Miss A. E. F. Horniman),[15] Warden—Hora Et Semper (E. A. Hunter). And seven were instructional: Divination—Vigilate (Mrs Helen Rand), Clairvoyance—Deo Date (Mrs E. A. Hunter), Tarot and Chess — Silentio (Reena Fulham Hughes), Ceremonial—Ma Wahanu Thesi (M. W. Blackden), Symbolism—Aequo Animo (Charles Rosher), Mystical Philosophy—Demon Est Deus Inversus (W. B. Yeats), General Instruction—Dum Spiro Spero (Henrietta Paget).

We are indebted to the Statement for one other important bit of information: the resolution of a lawsuit over the property in the Order rooms. On 27 April Crowley, under a new alias of Edward Aleister, summoned Mrs Emery 'before the Police Magistrate of the West London Police Court, for unlawfully and without just cause detaining certain papers and other articles, the property of the Complainant'. Before the case was called up, however, Crowley's solicitor admitted defeat: 'On behalf of the Complainant I withdraw the summons, and I undertake to pay £5 costs within 7 days.'

So the great struggle whimpered to an end. On 26 April Mathers wrote a final bitter letter to Blackden going over the old issues and insisting that 'there has been much more precipitation than discretion' 'in your recent action'. He insisted also that Yeats had in fact asked Westcott 'to lead them should they succeed in shaking off my authority'—to which Yeats replied in a footnote: 'This "fact" is fiction.—D.E.D.I.' 'How difficult it seems', Mathers concluded, 'for many of the London Second Order to comprehend that I am neither to be bought, bribed, persuaded, tricked, bullied, frightened nor ridiculed into any line of action that I do not see fit to take. Could they only have understood this, the present difficult position in which

15 Miss Horniman was an early member who had been expelled by Mathers in 1896. Yeats circulated a petition with an appeal to Mathers for her reinstatement (see *Letters*, pp. 282–83) and insisted upon it after Mathers's expulsion. She replaced Bullock as scribe under the new system of government. Yeats also supported Miss Horniman strongly in a quarrel within the London temple in 1901. It is curious to conjecture what bearing his consistent support of her may have had upon her decision to underwrite the Abbey Theatre from 1904 to 1910.

they have voluntarily placed themselves would not have arisen.' Several weeks later Yeats summed up his feelings in a letter to AE: 'MacGregor apart from certain definite ill doings and absurdities, on which we had to act, has behaved with dignity and even courtesy. A fine nature gone to wrack. At last we have got a perfectly honest Order, with no false mystery and no mystagogues of any kind. Everybody is working, as I have never seen them work, and we have fought out our fight without one discourteous phrase or irrelevant issue:'[16] But the fight had been wearing. 'I wish very much I was at Coole,' Yeats wrote on 6 June, 'for I am tired of this noisy town . . . even the fact that MacGregor's masked man Crowley has been making wax images of us all, and putting pins in them, has not made life interesting.'[17]

For Mathers, in contrast, Yeats always maintained a nostalgic affection. Twenty years after the great quarrel and two years after Mathers's death, in a poem which was to become the 'Epilogue to "A Vision"', Yeats paid a grudging tribute to the friend of his 'first hard springtime':

> He had much industry at setting out,
> Much boisterous courage, before loneliness
> Had driven him crazed;
> For meditations upon unknown thought
> Make human intercourse grows less and less.[18]

It is surely significant that the book which was to represent the distillation of thirty-five years of religious and philosophic experience should open in praise of Vestigia Nulla Retrorsum and close in praise of Deo Duce Comite Ferro.[19]

With this brief introduction the following list of documents will be self-explanatory. It should be clear, at any rate, that they cast considerable light upon an important and hitherto neglected episode in Yeats's intellectual life.

16 *Letters*, p. 344.
17 Ibid., p. 346.
18 'All Souls Night', *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1957), p. 473. The poem was composed at Oxford in 1920.
19 Yeats also recorded his memories of Mathers in 'The Tragic Generation' (1922). (See *Autobiographies*, pp. 335–39.) Mrs Mathers was much upset with Yeats's character sketch and expressed her resentment in several unpublished letters which I hope soon to use as the basis of a brief article.

The identities of members mentioned in the documents are as follows: D.D.C.F. (MacGregor Mathers), S.S.D.D. (Florence Farr Emery), S.A. (Wynn Westcott), L.O. (P. W. Bullock), S.D.A. (Fräulein Anna Sprengel), H.E.S. (E. A. Hunter), M.W.Th. (M. W. Blackden), D.E.D.I. (W. B. Yeats).

WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

ATTESTING THE ACCOMPANYING STATEMENT.

DOCUMENT.

I. *February 16th, 1900.* Letter from D.D.C.F. to S.S.D.D. accusing S.A. of forgery.

II. *March 18th.* Letter from L.O. to D.D.C.F., explaining how the position of the Order was affected by Doc. I.

III. *March 18th.* Letter from D.D.C.F. to S.S.D.D. refusing to recognize the Committee or to go into the question of Doc. I.

IV. *March 23rd.* Letter from D.D.C.F. to S.S.D.D. purporting to remove her from her post in Second Order.

V. *March 23rd.* Letter from D.D.C.F. to L.O. of similar purport.

VI. *March 24th.* Resolutions passed by the Second Order, empowering the Committee to act for them.

VII. *March 24th.* Letter from L.O. to D.D.C.F. showing that the suppression of Doc. I would amount to compounding a felony.

VIII. *March 25th.* Letter from S.S.D.D. to D.D.C.F. explaining the reason of the formation of the Committee.

IX. *March 29th.* Report of Committee on an interview between L.O. and S.A. with regard to his correspondence with S.D.A.

X. *April 2nd.* Letter from D.D.C.F. to L.O. refusing to acknowledge right of Second Order to elect Committee, and threatening members with the Punitive Current.

XI. *(a) April 17th.* Account by H.E.S. of the forcing of the rooms by Crowley and Miss Simpson.

(b) Printed Summons from Crowley.

(c) April 19th. Account of Crowley's arrival to interview members.

(d) Printed document from Crowley.

XII. *(a) April 26th, 1900.* Letter from D.D.C.F. to M.W.Th. proving identity of Crowley and the "Envoy."

(b) Telegram from Crowley to M.W.Th.

XIII. *April.* Resolutions passed suspending D.D.C.F. and his Council.

XIV. Speech by D.E.D.I. on D.D.C.F's. position.

XV. *April 21st.* Regulations passed by Second Order framing the New Constitution.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

DOCUMENT I.

N.B.—*Read this letter carefully before showing any part of it to anyone!*

87, Rue Mozart,
Auteuil, Paris,
16th February, 1900.

C. ET V. H. SOROR, S.S.D.D.,

My time is just now so enormously occupied with the arrangements for the Buildings and Decorations of the Egyptian Temple of Isis in Paris, as well as other matters, that I *must* write as briefly as possible.

(a) I have never wished to interfere in your private affairs, but if you choose to bring mine into a discussion in a Second Order Meeting, the matter concerns me as well as yourself.

(b) As you did not date your letter to me, and as I received it on the 13th January, 1900, it was difficult for me to conceive that it had been written *after* instead of *before* the meeting on the twelfth. I possess a copy of the minutes of that meeting.

(c) I *refuse definitely* to close Isis-Urania Temple, and am prepared to receive the Resignations from their offices of those chiefs who no longer wish to serve as such. I can understand in your case, that in addition to your somewhat heavy work in the Second Order, holding office in Isis has been an additional load.

(d) Now, with regard to the Second Order, it would be with the *very greatest regret* both from my personal regard for you, as well as from the occult standpoint that I should receive your Resignation as my Representative in the Second Order in London; but I cannot let you form a combination to make a schism therein with the idea of working secretly or avowedly under "Sapere Aude," under the mistaken impression that he received an Epitome of the Second Order work from G. H. Soror, "Sapiens dominabitur astris." For this forces me to tell you plainly (and, understand me well, I can prove to the hilt every word which I here say and more, and were I confronted with S.A., I should say the same), though for the sake of the Order, and for the circumstance that it would mean so deadly a blow to S.A.'s reputation, I entreat you to keep this secret from the *Order*, for the present, at least, though you are at perfect liberty to show *him* this if you think fit, *after mature consideration.*

(e) He has NEVER been *at any time* either in personal or in written communication with the Secret Chiefs of the Order, he having *either himself forged or procured to be forged* the professed correspondence between him and them, and my tongue having been tied all these years by a previous Oath of Secrecy to him, demanded by him, from me, before showing me what he had either done or caused to be done or both.—You must comprehend from what little I say here, the *extreme gravity* of such a matter, and again I ask you, both for his sake and that of the Order, not to force me to go farther into the subject.[20]

I again reiterate that *every atom* of the knowledge of the Order has come *through me alone* from 0–0 to 5–6 inclusive, and that it is I alone

20 Paragraphs (d) and (e) are quoted in full, with some minor changes, in *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley: An Autohagiography*, ed. John Symonds and Kenneth Grant (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), p. 194.

who have been and am in communication with the Secret Chiefs of the Order.

I may further incidentally remark that "Sapiens dominabitur astris" is now in Paris, and aiding me with the Isis movement.

Lastly, I again ask you to consider well this letter, and not to put me in such a position that I shall be compelled to act publicly.

Yours in fraternity and sincerity,

DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO,
7–4,
Chief of the Second Order.

DOCUMENT II.

69, Thornton Avenue,
Bedford Park, W.,
March 18th, 1900.

CARE ET V. H. FRA, D.D.C.F.

I enclose you copy of a letter which I addressed to you on the 4th inst., in case by any chance it has miscarried.

On the other hand, it may be that, for reasons which you are doubtless better able to judge of than ourselves, you have hitherto refrained from making a reply. It has therefore seemed desirable to my Committee that I should state more clearly the views which have actuated them.

I am accordingly requested to say that your statements respecting forgeries by G. H. FRA, N.O.M., appearing likely to shake the confidence of the whole Second Order in some of its fundamental traditions, it appeared best in the first instance to confine the consideration of the matter exclusively to the seven members whose names I have indicated.

We find ourselves in the position of having lent ourselves—and such influence as our long connection with the Order may constitute—to the dissemination of ideas, traditions or actual teaching to others

who have come into the Order after us, and it is consequently with deep concern that we now gather reflection is cast on some of them — a state of mind which is contributed to by the uncertainty at present surrounding the matter.

If therefore you can see your way to accede to our suggestion (made in response to your offer to prove the matter completely) we shall all feel at least assured and be able to deliberate, if need be, in conjunction with yourself as to the desirability of taking further action, in order to place the Order on its true basis.

Yours fraternally,

LEVAVI OCULOS.

DOCUMENT III.

87, Rue Mozart,
Auteuil, Paris,
18th March, 1900.

C. ET V. H. SOR, S.S.D.D.

I approve your choice of officers for the ensuing 6 months for Isis-Urania, Temple No. 3, viz. (here follow names of officers, password, name of candidate for admittance to 0–0.)

I in no way recognise any Committee formed by you to consider my *private* letter to you concerning the matter upon which I wrote; and I shall not discuss the matter further for the present unless I deem it advisable so to do.

All these complications could have been avoided had you written me an open straightforward letter at the beginning of the year, saying you wished to retire *from office.*

I duly received Mrs. —— and her daughter's resignations, which are just as well.

All good wishes from yours fraternally and in haste,

DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO.

DOCUMENT IV.

87, Rue Mozart,
Auteuil, Paris.
March 23rd, 1900.

C. ET V. H. SOR, "SAPIENTIA SAPIENTI DONO DATA."

My letter was a personal one to you, I did not empower you to form any Committee for its consideration, and I refuse to recognise such Committee. I forbid the meeting of the Second Order called for to-morrow; and I charge you on your pledge of obedience to me as a Theoricus Adept to abstain from further action in the matter.

I, furthermore, remove you from your position as my Representative in the Second Order in London, for I can no longer feel confidence in you as such.

Yours fraternally,

DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO.

Chief of the Second Order. 7–4

DOCUMENT V.

87, Rue Mozart,
Paris.
March 23rd, 1900.

C. ET V. H. FRA. "L.O."

I thank you for your courteous letters. I in no sense acknowledge the Committee you mention; neither do I intend to go into the matter with you at present.

My letter was a private letter to my then representative, "S.S.D.D."

By this post I write to relieve her of that office. I forbid the meeting

of the Second Order called for to-morrow, and I charge you on your pledge of obedience to me as a Theoricus Adept to abstain from further action in the matter.

Yours fraternally,

DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO.

Chief of the Second Order. 7–4

To V. H. Fra. Levavi Oculos, Th. Ad. Mi. 5–6

DOCUMENT VI.

Resolutions passed at a Meeting of the Second Order, duly convened and held on March 24th, 1900.

1. That V. H. Sorores, S.S.D.D., Deo Date, and V. H. Fratres, D.E.D.I., Hora et Semper, M.W. Th. [,] Volo Noscere and Levavi Oculos, are hereby appointed by this representative Meeting of Members of the Second Order to act as a Committee and to investigate the questions which have been placed before this Meeting concerning the circumstances surrounding the foundations of this Order, and to report thereon in due course.

2. That all official work or actions of the Order, apart from the special work of the Committee and such part of the routine work of the Order as they may think desirable, be suspended until the Committee report.

DOCUMENT VII.

69, Thornton Avenue,
Bedford Park, N.
24th March, 1900.

Care et G. H. Frater, D.D.C.F.

I am in receipt of your letter, contents of which I note. I regret, however, that it did not arrive before my departure this morning, one

consequence of which has been that members of the Second Order met together this afternoon in ignorance of your wishes.

At that meeting, Resolutions were passed, copies of which I enclose you.

It is unfortunate that you did not mark your letter to S.S.D.D. "private" in the first instance; now, however, that it has been freely disclosed with the Second Order, members feel—and I am bound to say I concur in the view—that the constitutive warrant upon which the Order was originally founded is impugned, because the correspondence which now turns out to be forged (and which I and others remember quite clearly) led up to the warrant, granting it in fact to the three original chiefs.

Abstention on our part to follow the matter up, would clearly be the equivalent of compounding a felony, and the universal feeling is —and here again I cannot refuse my concurrence—that no obligation subversive of morality can be binding either by natural law or the law of the Land.

That this, too, is your own view is clear from the action which you have recently elected to take in somewhat similar circumstances, and the necessity for which no one deplores more than myself.

One more thing I wish to point out as regards myself and that is that the correspondence in question, shown to me as it was, years ago, was not without its influence upon my mind, assuring me (as I considered) in some positive measure of the existence of the secret Chiefs of the Order; indeed, as I analyse these impressions, I find they were almost exclusively derived from that source. Certainly this was so in the earlier stages. While, therefore, I do not say that had these notions been lacking, I should not have progressed further, it is clearly open to others to take that position. As a piece of historical evidence, I know I have often mentioned the matter of these letters and their contents to others in the Second Order both before and since their withdrawal, and to that extent at least, have unwittingly assisted in the perpetration of the deception. To such, in justice to myself, I owe the duty of making a correction.

Yours fraternally,

LEVAVI OCULOS.

DOCUMENT VIII.

Bromley,
25th March.

CARE ET G. H. FRATER.

Your letter to me was marked "consider this letter well before showing any part of it to anyone." I did so—I went into the country and spent days of thought on the whole subject. I saw that if I kept silence I should become a party to a fraud, and therefore took the advice of some Members of the Order who have always been friendly to your interests. We sent you repeated messages, couched in most respectful terms, pointing out as delicately as possible the impressions conveyed by your letter. You refused to recognise this friendly Committee, so the only thing to be done was to get the Committee appointed by the 2nd Order Council of Adepts. This has been done, and neither I nor any one else have power to prevent the matter being carried to its legal conclusion.

I did not receive your letter of 23rd of March until I returned to my private address at 12 o'clock on Saturday evening, where it had been forwarded as usual from 36, ———.[21] Our oaths are covered by the written assurance that nothing contrary to our civil, moral or religious welfare is demanded from us.

Yours fraternally,

S.S.D.D.

DOCUMENT IX.

March 29th.

Fra. L.O. reports having seen V. H. Fra. S.A., who gave his honourable assurance that for anything he knew to the contrary the German lady, Fräulein Sprengel, the author of the letters alleged to be forged by him (S.A.) was the person she purported to be; his communications with her had only been by letter, and he had bona fide posted letters to her in Germany and received letters in reply.

21 36, Blythe Road, the address of the Meeting Room.

DOCUMENT X.

87, Rue Mozart,
Auteuil, Paris,
2nd April, 1900.

C. ET V. H. FRA. "LEVAVI OCULOS."

I do *not* recognise the right of the Second Order either to elect a Committee without my authorization and consent, or to take upon themselves the responsibility arresting of the work of the Order, save and only by my direct commands. I *annul* the Committee and I *annul* the Resolutions passed at the meeting of the 24th March, 1900. I cannot therefore accept your report of that meeting, and I return you herewith the typewritten copy of its proceedings which you sent me.

I stand by my manifesto issued to the Theorici Adepti on Thursday, October 29th, 1896, after the comprehension of which each Theoricus Adept sent me a written Declaration of allegiance which I have kept as a pleasing momento of fidelity to their engagements, that of "De Profundis ad Lucem" (Gardner) is especially of value in the view of the line of action he has recently taken.

I have always acknowledged and shall always maintain the authority of the Secret Chiefs of the Order, to whom and the Eternal Gods I bow, but to *none* beside!

I know to a nicety the capacities of my human brain and intelligence and what these can of themselves grasp, and I therefore know also when the Forces of the Beyond, and the Presences of the Infinite manifest, and when the Great Adepts of this Planet still in the body of flesh, the Secret Chiefs of our Order are with me.

Do you imagine that where such men as Count de Gébelin, Eteilla, Christian and Levi failed in their endeavour to discover the Tarot attributions that I would be able of my own power and intelligence *alone* to lift the veil which has baffled *them?**

You have seen the development of the Theosophical Society, and

*These attributions are given in the Cypher MSS., and were not found through D.D.C.F.'s lifting the veil, whether alone or otherwise.—S.S.D.D.

that since the death of Madame Blavatsky nothing but turmoil and strife have arisen, and that that association is tottering to its fall. And I tell you plainly that were it *possible* to remove me from my place as the Visible Head of our Order (the which *cannot* be without my own consent, because of certain magical links) you would find nothing but disruption and trouble fall upon you all until you had expiated so severe a Karma as that of opposing a current sent at the end of a century to regenerate a Planet.

And for the first time since I have been connected with the Order, I shall formulate my request to Highest Chiefs for the Punitive Current to be prepared, to be directed against those who rebel; should they consider it (after examination of the Status of the London Order) advisable.

Some of you have been pleased to remark that I have condoned a felony. I would sooner condone any number of offences against the Law of Man, than I would fail in the first duty of an Occultist, which is Fraternity and Fidelity, and it is the want of these in the English Order which has been the root of all mischief.

It is a very easy thing for you to ask "Sapere Aude" for the address of "Sapiens dominabitur astris," and find out if she lived there, Fraulein Sprengel I think he said her name was, and I believe the address he gave was Ulm, Heidelburg or Nuremburg, also it should be easy to get from him the copy of the correspondence which he retired. But I have nothing to do with all this, and "S.S.D.D." has acted injudiciously in making my letter to her as my representative a lever for increasing dissension in the Order.

I thank you, as always, for your courteous manner of writing, and you have my best wishes.

I have been and am so occupied that I could not answer your letter before. Athor Temple alone takes much of my time and it is increasing rapidly in numbers.

Yours in haste and with best wishes,

DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO.

DOCUMENT XIA.

STATEMENT BY FRA. H.E.S.

On Tuesday, 17th instant, I received telegram from Miss Cracknell to come at once to Blythe Road. On arriving, I found that the rooms which had been closed by Order of Mrs. Emery had been broken into. On entering, after a certain resistance, I found there Aleister Crowley and Miss Elaine Simpson, who declared that they had taken possession by the authority of MacGregor Mathers, and showing me documents to that effect. I said the authority of that gentleman had been suspended by a practically unanimous vote at a duly convened meeting of the Members of the Society. Crowley said that Miss Cracknell, who had entered with me, must leave the room, as she had been suspended from membership, which, of course, I refused to allow, except with that lady's consent.

In the meantime, Mrs. Emery arrived, and, seeing the state of affairs, fetched a constable.

Unfortunately, Mr. Wilkinson, the landlord, was absent, and we could not then satisfactorily prove to whom legally the rooms belonged.

They had forced open the doors, put on fresh locks, and so for the time being were practically in possession.

If I had known the character of the man who goes under the name of E. A. Crowley, Aleister MacGregor, Count Svareff, I should not have allowed him to remain longer than I could have helped in the rooms of the Society. I did not then realise that he had no right there, having been absolutely refused admission to the London Society of the R. R. et A. C. Nevertheless, as subsequent events proved, it was well that MacGregor Mathers was enabled to further carry out his contemptible, theatrical farce as far as he did.[22]

22 After Mathers's letter of 16 February, Crowley wrote to him 'offering to place myself and my fortune unreservedly at his disposal'. Upon acceptance by Mathers, Crowley travelled to Paris to map strategy. On 12 April while returning to London he made 'an entry in my little book of Magical Rituals which reveals my state of mind':

> I, Perdurabo, as the Temporary Envoy Plenipotentiary of Deo Duce Comite Ferro & thus the Third from the Secret Chiefs of the Order of the Rose of Ruby and the Cross of Gold, do deliberately invoke all laws, all powers Divine, demanding that I, even I, be chosen to do such a work as he has done, at all costs to myself. And I record this holy aspiration in the Presence of the Divine Light, that it may stand as my witness.
> In Saecula Saeculorum. Amen! (Ibid., p. 196.)

DOCUMENT XIB.

17th April, 1900.

You are all cited to appear at Headquarters at 11.45 a.m. on the 20th inst.

Should you be unable to attend, an appointment at the earliest possible moment must be made by telegraphing to "MACGREGOR," at Headquarters.

There will be no meeting on the 21st inst.

By order of DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO,

Chief of the S ∴ O ∴

DOCUMENT XIC.

STATMENT BY FRA. H.E.S.

Early Thursday morning, Mr. Yeats and I called on Mr. Wilkinson (the landlord), and asked him how it was that he had allowed anyone to break into the rooms. It seems that Mrs. Emery's injunction as to the closing of the rooms had not been reported to him by his clerk, and that Mrs. Emery had not given written instructions to that effect; he knew, of course, that members came and went as they liked. We, therefore, felt that we could not hold him responsible for the intrusion. Mr. Wilkinson said Mrs. Emery was his tenant; she always paid him the rent for the rooms, and he held her responsible for the same.

Mrs. Emery had given us a letter to the landlord authorising us to have the locks changed, which we had done forthwith.

About 11.30, Aliester Crowley arrived in Highland dress, a black mask over his face, and a plaid thrown over his head and shoulders, an enormous gold or gilt cross on his breast, and a dagger at his side. He swiftly passed the clerk in the shop below, which he had no right to do, but was stopped by Mr. Wilkinson in the back hall, who sent

us word upstairs. Mr. Yeats and I went downstairs and told him he had no right whatever to enter the premises. By his request the landlord sent for a constable, who, on learning the situation, told him to go, which he at once did, saying he should place the matter in the hands of a lawyer. A man arrived about 1 o'clock, who showed a letter from Mr. Crowley, asking him to attend at 36, Blythe Road, at 11 o'clock, but he had been all over London searching for Blythe Road. He did not quite know what he had come for, he thought there was some sort of entertainment on. Mr. C. had engaged him, he said, outside the Alhambra, evidently in the official capacity of chucker-out. I took the man's name and address. Mr. Wilkinson was interested in the matter of Mr. Crowley's intrusion from the fact that his name was on the black list of the journal of the Trades' Protection Association, to which Mr. Wilkinson belonged. Mr. Crowley gave as his authority for entering the rooms, the Earl of Glenstrae, otherwise Count MacGregor. There were numerous telegrams that day for MacGregor, 36, Blythe Road, and late in the evening a foreign telegram. These were all refused, name being unknown. A parcel early in the morning arrived from Clarkson, wigmaker, for Miss Simpson, which was handed to her on her departure.

DOCUMENT XID.

15, Randolph Road,
Maida Vale, W.,
Monday, April 23rd.

The Envoy of G. H. Frater Deo Duce Comite Ferro, 7°=4° Chief of the S.O., unto all members of the London Branch of the S.O.

GREETING.

It is first fitting that I express my sincere regret that members of the S.O. should have been put to unnecessary trouble.

In defiance of a promise* given by Mrs. Emery, Miss Cracknell,

*Inaccurate–S.S.D.D.

and Mr. Hunter, to V. H. Soror Fidelis and V. H. Frater Pedurabo, the rooms were forced open and various property of mine detained, while the projected interviews were made impossible

The Courts of Law will shortly decide further concerning this action.

It should be mentioned that the story of the masked man is altogether untrue.

I hereby suspend V. H. Sorores S.S.D.D., and Tempus Omnia Revelat, and V. H. Fratres Hora et Semper, Levavi Oculos, and Demon est Deus Inversus, from both orders.

I must now request that an appointment be made with me by each individual member of the S.O., and at the above address.

Letters may be addressed to Miss Elaine Simpson.

Failing this, or a serious and reasonable excuse, suspension from both orders will operate automatically at noon on Tuesday.

My authority for this action will be shown to each member on arriving at the interview.[23]

Witness my Seal.

23 Crowley explains the object of this interview in the *Confessions*. While in Paris, he and Mathers 'formulated the following proposal for dealing with the refractory "temple"'.

I. The Second Order to be summoned at various times during two or three days. They to find, on being admitted one by one, a masked man in authority and a scribe. These questions, etc. pass, after pledge of secrecy concerning interviews.

A. Are you convinced of the truth of the doctrines and knowledge received in the grade $5^\circ=6^\square$? Yes or No?

If yes (1) Then their origin can spring from a pure source only?

If no (2) I degrade you to be a Lord of the Paths in the Portal in the Vault of the Adepts.

B. If he reply 'yes', the masked man continues: Are you satisfied with the logic of this statement? Do you solemnly promise to cease these unseemly disputes as to the headship of this Order? I for my part can assure you from my knowledge that D.D.C.F. is really a $7^\circ=4^\square$.

If yes (3) Then you will sign this paper; it contains a solemn re-affirmation of your obligation as a $5^\circ=6^\square$ slightly expanded, and a pledge to support heartily the new regulations.

If no (4) I expel you from this Order.

DOCUMENT XIIA.

This is NOT a private letter!

87, Rue Mozart,
Auteuil, Paris,
April 26th, 1900.

C. ET V. H. FRATER "Ma Wahanu Thesi,"

I have received your letters and recognise that both in them and in your recent action there has been much more precipitation than discretion, and while admitting from what I know of you that your intent has been to act rightly, I none the less condemn the manner of such action and the liberty of speech in which you have dared to indulge regarding what I have thought fit to do and to command to be done. The only excuse I see in your favour beyond what I have already admitted is that in the midst of a current of absolute mania which appears to be acting in the London Second Order, you would seem to have somewhat of sanity left.

To that quality in you therefore, I address the rest of this letter. And I am not writing thus with the purpose of insulting you, but rather of endeavouring to aid you to arouse yourself to a clearer comprehension of your environment.

(a) Your remarks *re* the matter of "Sapere Aude" not being desired to lead by certain members of the Second Order are difficult to reconcile with the FACT† of "Demon est Deus Inversus" having asked him to lead them should they succeed in shaking off my authority; as well as with S.S.D.D's having implied or

II. The practice of masks is to be introduced. Each member will know only the member who introduced him.

Severe tests of the candidate's moral excellence, courage, earnestness, humility, refusal to do wrong, to be inserted in the Portal or $5^\circ=6^\square$ ritual.

III. Outer Order to be summoned. Similar regulations to be announced to them. New pledges required that they will not communicate the identity of anybody they happen to have known to any new member.

IV Vault to be reconsecrated. (Ibid., pp. 195–96.)

†This "fact" is fiction.—D.E.D.I.

expressed such an idea as she believed S.A. to have received an Epitome of the Second Order working from "Sapiens dominabitur astris." I would advise you on another occasion to be more certain of your premiss major before risking an enthymeme to me.

(b) You appear to discern no perfidy in "S.S.D.D's" making public a letter of mine to her of which every line bore the meaning of a privileged communication, neither do you seem to see any error in the malignant hurry with which she endeavoured to place either "Sapere Aude" or myself, or both, in a position of public humiliation, notwithstanding the many kindnesses she has received in the past from us both and especially from "S.A."

(c) As regards mistakes in the Order Knowledge it does not appear to have struck these would-be critics that the subject was beyond their criticism. But I admit that I *have* committed one great though unavoidable fault, which is this: in giving these persons so great a knowledge I have not also been able to give them brains and intelligence to comprehend it, for this miracle the Gods have not granted me the power to perform. You had better address your reproaches to the Gods rather than to me, unless some spark of returning wisdom can make you recognise in such "critics" the swine who trample the Divine teachings underfoot.

You say "am I to understand that there is never to be any truth and light let in upon our order?" I tell you there has been too much truth and too much light let in upon these rebellious children of clay, and it has blinded them!

(d) For my Envoy—I sent him as my *impersonal* representative, wherefore I selected a man in whose fidelity I could trust (a very rare factor in the London Second Order), who, being the latest admitted, was without influence gained therein by seniority or grade; and still further to mark his impersonality in this matter, I distinguished him by a symbol, and not by a name, and advised him further to wear a mask of Osiris as laid down in Z, should the same be necessary; so as completely to separate and distinguish between his individuality and the office with which I had invested him.

And I may remark that to term the Highland Dress a "masquerade" is hardly even *English good taste* when the blood of the Highland Regiments is reddening South African earth; though in my opinion shed in a mistaken quarrel and in the wrong cause.

How difficult it seems for many of the London Second Order to comprehend that I am neither to be bought, bribed, persuaded, tricked, bullied, frightened nor ridiculed into any line of action that I do not see fit to take! Could they only have understood this, the present difficult position in which they have voluntarily placed themselves would not have arisen.

Yours still fraternally,

DEO DUCE COMITE FERRO.

Chief of the Second Order. 7–4

DOCUMENT XIIB.

Inland Telegram.

329, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.,
27th April, 1900.

To BLACKDEN, Handed in 3.23 p.m.

6, Topsfield Parade, Crouch End.

Macgregor's admission identify envoy made in error, please keep it secret for everybody's sake.

PERDURABO.

DOCUMENT XIII.

RESOLUTION PASSED AT COMMITTEE MEETING.

That Messrs. MacGregor, Mathers and Dr. Berridge, Mrs. and Miss Simpson, are hereby suspended from membership in R. R. et

A. C. in London, pending the decision of the College of Adepti. And furthermore that no person shall be deemed to belong to the London Branch who has not been initiated by that body in London.

DOCUMENT XIV.

A meeting of the Society of the R.A.A.C. in London was held on Saturday, the 21st of April, 1900. The chair was taken at 3.45 p.m. After V. H. FRATER, L.O. had read the minutes of the previous meetings, V. H. SOROR Vigilate proposed, and V. H. FRATER Causa Scientiae seconded, the adoption of the report.

Thereon, V. H. FRATER, D.E.D.I. gave an address on the history of the Order, and explained the illegalities which had crept in, in recent years. At the commencement of the Order there were three Chiefs, the G. H. FRATRES, M.E.V., N.O.M., and D.D.C.F., but at the G. H. FRATER, M.E.V.'s death, no Chief was appointed in his place, and again upon the G. H. FRATER, S.A.'s resignation some four years ago, no one was appointed in his place. Therefore, instead of the three Chiefs required by the constitution there came to be only one Chief—the G. H. FRATER, D.D.C.F. The speaker spoke of the personal sorrow that it gave him to describe the actions which the G. H. FRATER, D.D.C.F. had taken. The G. H. FRATER, D.D.C.F. had gradually become entirely autocratic, and furthermore, moved as it seems by jealousy, he had made a charge against the V. H. FRATER, S.A., of forging, or causing to be forged, the documents on which the warrant was based and the Order established. This charge, when requested to do so, the G. H. FRATER, D.D.C.F. absolutely refused to substantiate or to withdraw. He then referred to the not less lamentable, though altogether ludicrous, proceedings of the past week, which were referred to in the Committee's report, and went on to say, that although he was sure we should all agree in our gratitude for what the G. H. FRATER, D.D.C.F. had done for us, yet his amazing actions showed that a change must be made in our constitution. He then referred to the legal aspects of the matter and to the property of the Order, and explained the pecuniary transactions which had taken place between 1892 and 1896. He then went on to refer to the resolutions which the Committee proposed for the reconstruction of the Order.

DOCUMENT XV.

April 21st.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY 22 MEMBERS OF R. R. ET A. C. ON THE *21st* OF *April.*

1. That the past Constitution of the Order of R. R. et A. C. in London is hereby declared at an end.
2. That the Order R. R. et A. C. in London consists of those who are here present, and of such among the old Members who are unable to be present but who shall hereafter assent to the resolutions of this meeting, and of such members of the Society known as the G. D. in the Outer, as shall be invited by the Executive Body.
3. That the Executive body of the R. R. et A. C. shall consist of 3 Chiefs, and of 7 Members who may or may not be amongst those most advanced but who shall as far as possible be specialists in the various studies of the Order.
4. That the aforesaid 3 chiefs and 7 members shall be first nominated by the 12 most advanced members of the Order; then elected by the members of the R. R. et A. C. in London, and they shall stand annually for re-election.
5. If at any time there be more than 12 members in the highest degree, they shall choose 12 from among themselves, either by election or according to seniority in progress, who shall act as nominators of the Executive.
6. The Committee of 7 which was appointed on March 12th shall administer the affairs of the Order until the new Executive has been fully constituted.
7. Soror Vigilate to take the place of M. W. Th. on the Committee.
8. Frater Aequo Animo to take that of Volo Noscere.
9. That the Executive acting in conjunction with the most advanced members of the Order enquire into the question of how far the system of teaching and the rituals of the Order should be altered,

with a view to separating what may be genuine from what may have been added by the personal fantasy of any member of this Order.

10. Expulsion only to take place when the Executive and the 12 advanced members sitting together agree by a three-fourths majority, at least three-quarters being present.

11. That this change in the Constitution of the Order in no way affects its connection with the Rosicrucian Order.

Letters to Herbert Horne, Ernest Radford and Elkin Mathews

Edited by Ian Fletcher

1. To Herbert Horne

Walter Crane[1] was at our last and read verse. Have you his address? I have not but could get it.

3 Blenheim Rd,
Bedford Park,
Chiswick.

My dear Horne,[2]

I find that next Thursday week[3] would suit the Rhymers very well for next meeting and that they would be very glad to accept your suggested invitation to 20 Fitzroy Street.[4] I enclose a list of names.[5] If Thursday does not suit you I have no doubt that any other day about the same date would serve them equally.

Yrs

W. B. Yeats.

Source: Mrs G. Dugdale.

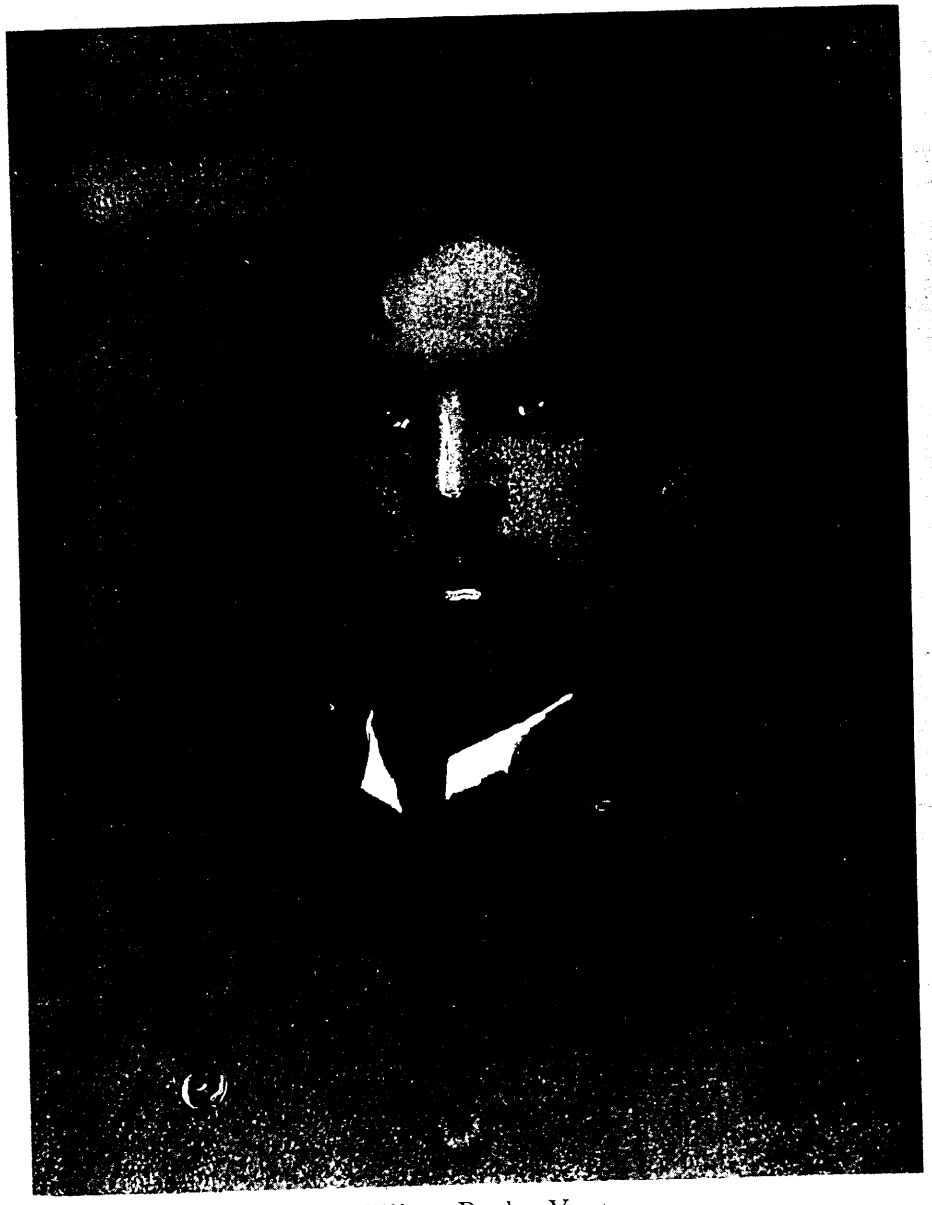
1 Walter Crane (1845–1915), painter, book-illustrator, writer of manuals on the applied arts, like Oscar Wilde attended the meetings of poets at 20 Fitzroy Street in 1889 and 1890. He published a volume of verse, *Renascence,* in 1891.

2 Herbert Percy Horne (1864–1916), architect, historian of art, book designer, poet, was editor of the *Century Guild Hobby Horse* and the *Hobby Horse.*

3 Horne has written under the address: (P.M. 19 JA. 91).

4 'Whiteladies' known as 'The Fitzroy Settlement'. At that time it was owned by the architect and designer A. H. Mackmurdo; Horne and the painter T. H. McLachlan had studios there; Selwyn Image also, probably; Lionel Johnson lived in two rooms on the top floor.

5 The list of names has not survived.



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